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## Soviet Radar's Purpose Still Mystery

**T**he Reagan administration has accused the Soviet Union of violating key provisions of the Antiballistic Missile Treaty by building a large radar facility near Krasnoyarsk in central Siberia. The treaty, calculated to prevent either superpower from achieving invulnerability to missile attack, allows such radars only on the periphery of national territory, aiming outward.

The Soviets insist that the radar facility doesn't violate the treaty, and some experts in the State Department have suggested there is a domestic political reason for the Soviets' stubbornness over the Krasnoyarsk radar. The facility, they say, may be a manifestation of that great American tradition: the pork barrel.

Proponents of this view point out that Soviet President Konstantin U. Chernenko grew up in Siberia, and started up the bureaucratic ladder as a border guard there. Like any powerful American politician, he may have influenced the decision to build the radar at Krasnoyarsk as a way of throwing a little pork to the home folks.

The CIA, while not necessarily convinced by the pork-barrel theory, reports that Chernenko has shown unusual reluctance to dismantle the radar.

On the other hand, veteran Kremlinologists pooh-pooh such a "western" explanation for construction of the Krasnoyarsk radar. They point out that Chernenko left Siberia 50 years ago, and add that he was merely an aide to Leonid I. Brezhnev when the radar was first proposed.

Pragmatists have concluded that the Krasnoyarsk site was probably chosen for reasons of convenience and feasibility, without regard for

the treaty. The Soviets' only other option would have required two facilities farther east in Siberia—in terrain technically too difficult for Soviet engineers.

Once the United States began complaining about the Krasnoyarsk radar, too much had been spent on it. "They probably didn't want to admit that they made a mistake," one source explained.

The National Security Council has weighed the matter and concluded bluntly: "The Krasnoyarsk radar is almost certainly a violation of legal obligations of the ABM Treaty."

The NSC explains why in a secret report obtained by my associates Dale Van Atta and Donald Goldberg.

"The location, orientation and type of this radar raise significant questions . . . [Treaty provisions] prohibit deployment of such radars except at locations along the periphery of national territory and oriented outward for early warning of ballistic-missile attack and elsewhere for space tracking," the document explains.

The Krasnoyarsk radar seems "suited for closing the last remaining gap in Soviet ballistic-missile early-warning coverage," the report adds, noting that it will give warning of U.S. land-based missiles targeted on Siberia and on submarine-launched missile attacks from the Pacific. As the report concedes, though, "warning time provided by such a radar would be increased if it were located on the periphery rather than the interior."

That, of course, raises the original mystery: Why did the Soviets build the radar at Krasnoyarsk in the first place?